



EUROPEAN CENTRAL BANK

EUROSYSTEM

ECB-PUBLIC

CALL TO EXPRESS INTEREST

FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE

PROCUREMENT PROCEDURE FOR THE

PROVISION OF EVENT AGENCY SERVICES FOR THE ANNUAL

ECB FORUM ON CENTAL BANKING (EFCB)

PRO-04738

2020/S 052-122406

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I. Introduction

As announced in the contract notice of 13 March 2020, Ref. number 2020/S 052-122406, the European Central Bank (ECB) is seeking interested parties through this Call to express interest for participating in a procurement procedure for the provision of Event Management Services for the annual ECB Forum on Central Banking (EFCB).

1. Background

The ECB Forum on Central Banking (EFCB) was held for the first time in May 2014 and takes place annually with approximately 200 high-level participants. Since 2014 the venue of the EFCB has been Penha Longa Resort (<http://www.penhalonga.com/>) in Sintra, Portugal.

In 2020 the event is scheduled to take place from 29 June to 1 July. In the future, the event may take place in a different location, possibly outside of Portugal but within the European Union.

The ECB is seeking through this procurement a supplier for the provision of event agency services for the EFCB. The ECB intends to award one framework agreement for the provision of the services described in Section 2 to the Tenderer offering the best value for money. The contract is envisaged to start in June 2020 and shall remain in effect for a period of three years, with a possibility for extension for one further year. The contract value is expected to be approx. EUR 1,500,000 plus optional services (see description of tasks in Section 2). This estimate shall not be binding on the ECB; actual requirements may be different depending on the business requirements.

The Directorate General Communications, Internal & External Engagement Division of the ECB is seeking a Contractor with proven experience in organising high-level conferences and events throughout Europe, and with an established network of partners/sub-contractors in other EU countries, in particular in Portugal.

2. Description of services

The tasks of the successful tenderer may include:

- (a) Consultancy services including:
 - development of and advising on the event concept based on input from the ECB;
 - define ideas for designing and implementing the conference-related content, the room set-up, state-of-the-art technical facilities and innovative solutions;
 - advise on the communication strategy;
- (b) Project management, coordination of all preparatory tasks, event management on-site and provision of services including:

- invitation and registration management including maintenance of participants' records in electronic form on a secure platform, distribution of invitations, management of queries from invitees and provision of regular participant status reports;
 - design services;
 - security services, including provision of screening lanes (X-ray machines and tents) and staff, outdoor security cameras, barriers and coordination of security services with all stakeholders (e.g. ECB security and various local authorities);
 - set-up of the conference rooms and other rooms of the venue (e.g. press room) including but not limited to construction and set-up of stages for the conference, dinner and press rooms, registration and welcome desk, provision of furniture and equipment (e.g. tents and pavilions for outdoor interviews, bar stools for registration), production and set-up of backdrops for the conference areas;
 - technical and IT services for conference, dinner and press rooms, including set-up of all technical equipment needed to project presentations by speakers (lecterns, screens, all audio-visual equipment), sufficient lighting of the stage and conference area, and various equipment (e.g. iPads, cordless microphones, laptops, copy machines);
 - technology supervision, operations and support services on site;
 - multimedia services, including live video transmission of speeches and presentations from the conference venue to the press room and photography;
 - production of printed materials (e.g. banners, signposts, programme booklets);
 - provision of staff, e.g. reception staff / hostesses;
 - logistical and transportation services including VIP services at the airport, busses and limousines;
 - planning, preparing, set-up and dismantling of an exhibition for young economists at the conference venue, including technical equipment to display e-posters and voting stations to choose the best contributions;
 - other services, e.g. entertainment.
- (c) Optional services including
- filming, video production and live webcast the entire EFCB.

3. Legal framework

This Call to express interest for participation shall be governed by Decision ECB/2016/2 of 9 February 2016 laying down the Rules on Procurement¹, Articles 35 and 36 and the provisions of this Call to express interest.

¹ OJ L 45, 20.2.2016, p. 15-43, as amended by Decision ECB/2016/17 (OJ L 159, 16.6.2016, p. 21–22), both published on <http://www.ecb.europa.eu/ecb/proc/tenders/html/index.en.html>

II. Preparation and submission of expression of interest to participate

1. Communication, queries regarding the procedure

- 1.1 During the preparation of their expression of interest to participate all interested parties are encouraged to submit questions to the ECB on any aspect of the Call to express interest for participation.
- 1.2 Interested parties shall address all queries regarding this procedure to Mr Miklos Karoly, European Central Bank, Central Procurement Division, Sonnemannstrasse 22, 60314 Frankfurt am Main, Germany. Queries shall be submitted by e-mail to procurement@ecb.europa.eu. The ECB does not assume any responsibility for queries which are not submitted in writing.
- 1.3 The ECB shall endeavour to answer all queries as quickly as possible but cannot guarantee a minimum time response. The ECB shall not be bound to reply to queries received less than seven calendar days before the time-limit for the submission of expressed interest, but will try to do so if possible.
- 1.4 If a query is of general interest, the ECB shall communicate the query and the corresponding answer (Q&A) to all those interested to participate. The query shall be anonymised and information of a commercially confidential nature shall not be disclosed. The communication will be published by the ECB via the Internet platform as set out in the contract notice. Interested parties shall therefore regularly access the internet platform to verify whether a Q&A document is published. It should be noted that it is the sole responsibility of the interested parties to do so as the ECB will not follow up on this issue.
- 1.5 During the Call to express interest, those parties interested shall not contact any other ECB staff members (apart from the contact point specified in section 1.2 above) or organisations/persons working for the ECB with regard to this Call to express interest. Interested parties shall also not contact potential competitors unless they intend to form a temporary grouping with them or to involve them as subcontractors. Any violation of this communication rule may lead to the exclusion of the interested party in question.
- 1.6 Unless otherwise provided, all communication with the ECB shall be made in English.

2. Changes to documentation

The ECB may at any time prior to the expiry of the time-limit for the submission of expression of interests to participate, change or supplement the requirements set out in the contract notice or the Call to express interests for participation. The ECB may, if necessary, extend the time-limit for the submission of expressions of interest to participate. If need be, the ECB will also publish a corrigendum to the contract notice.

3. Preparation of the expressions of interest to participate; expenses

- 3.1 Interested parties shall obtain at their own responsibility and expense all information necessary for the preparation of their expressions of interest to participate. Interested parties are solely responsible for the costs and expenses incurred in connection with the preparation and submission of their expressions of interest to participate and all other stages of the tender procedure. The ECB shall not be liable for any costs or expenses borne by interested parties or persons involved by them.
- 3.2 Interested parties are solely responsible for obtaining the information which they consider is necessary in order to make decisions regarding the content of their Call to express interest and to undertake any investigations they consider necessary in order to verify any information provided to them.

4. E-mail address and time-limit for submission

- 5.1 Interested parties shall submit their expressions of interest to participate no later than **3 April 2020** to the following e-mail address Procurement@ecb.europa.eu making clear reference in the subject matter of the email to the relevant procurement number and procurement title.
- 5.2 The ECB will not consider expressions of interest to participate which reach the ECB after expiry of the above time-limit.

5. Format of the expression of interest to participate

- 5.1 The expression of interest to participate shall consist of the completed Response form (template attached as **Annex 1**), the completed Reference Projects Form (attached as **Annex 2**) and, where appropriate, supporting documents.
- 5.2 Interested parties are requested to submit their expression of interest to participate in digital version via e-mail. The digital version shall consist of pdf files. Generated pdf files shall be used except for documents which must be scanned for technical reasons (e.g. paper-based certificates). Filled-out forms shall be submitted as MS-Office documents (Word or Excel). In case of doubt, interested parties shall demonstrate the ECB's receipt of their e-mail submission.

6. Language

Interested parties shall submit all documents and information in English. Legal, financial, ISO and other certificates that have not been issued in English may be submitted in the original language. The ECB may request interested parties to provide a certified translation of the original document.

III. Evaluation of expressions of interest for participation

1. Evaluation process

- 1.1 The ECB intends to invite at least five (5) interested parties to submit a tender provided that a sufficient number of interested parties meeting the selection criteria is available. The ECB intends to invite the interested parties who best meet the selection criteria set out in Section 4 below. In addition, the ECB may, at its own discretion, invite suitable suppliers that have already been identified by the ECB.
- 1.2 The ECB may request interested parties to supplement their expressions of interest for participation or to clarify specific points. Interested parties shall respond to such requests within the reasonable time-limits set by the ECB. The ECB may not consider replies submitted after the expiry of the time-limit.
- 1.3 For the purpose of the evaluation the ECB may also take account of any other relevant information from public or specialist sources. The ECB may contact the reference persons indicated by the interested parties and ask specific questions. The questions and answers shall be documented in writing.

2. Formal requirements

- 2.1 The ECB may exclude expressions of interest for participation that
 - (a) were submitted after the expiry of the time-limit for the submission; or
 - (b) are substantially incomplete; or
 - (c) were not submitted in English.
- 2.2 The ECB may, at its own discretion, exclude interested parties that do not comply with other substantial formal requirements laid down in this Call to express interest.

3. Eligibility criteria

- 3.1 The tender procedure shall be open on equal terms to all natural or legal persons resident or located in the European Union and to all natural and legal persons resident or located in a country which has ratified the World Trade Organisation Agreement on Government Procurement or has concluded with the European Union a bilateral agreement on procurement under the conditions laid down in the said agreements.
- 3.2 The ECB shall exclude Candidates that are in one of the situations described in Article 30(4) of Decision ECB/2016/2 (e.g. conviction for fraud or corruption) or put on a blacklist in accordance with Article 30(8) of Decision ECB/2016/2.
- 3.3 The ECB may exclude Candidates that are in one of the situations described in Article 30(5) of Decision ECB/2016/2 (e.g. insolvency; grave professional misconduct; misrepresentation).
- 3.4 During the actual tender procedure, tenderers (i.e. interested parties that were invited to tender) will have to state in their declaration of honour that they meet the eligibility criteria. Failure to comply may lead to the exclusion of the tenderer.

4. Selection criteria and minimum capacity levels

4.1 Interested parties shall have the economic, financial, technical and professional capacity to perform the Contract.

4.2 Candidates must meet the following minimum requirements:

(a) Annual net turnover of at least EUR 1,000,000 for each of the three financial years 2016 - 2018;

If the Candidate is a temporary grouping it may add the respective turnover of its members, provided one of the members has a minimum of 60% of the turnover of the whole group.

(b) Proof of coverage with a professional liability insurance company, which shall provide for coverage in the minimum liability amount of EUR 10 million per claim.

(c) At least 10 employees working in the field of project and/or event management and communication consultancy;

(d) The capacity to provide a project team dedicated to the EFCB, which shall include at least one dedicated account manager (and one replacement), one security services manager, one IT services manager (for the registration site) and one designer. At least five team members must have, at minimum, English language skills (listening, reading, speaking and writing) at level C1 in accordance with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)². Some of these services may be outsourced.

As proof, Candidates shall submit:

(a) Completed **Annex 1**: the scanned digital copy of the Response form which is signed handwritten by an authorised representative of the Tenderer. If the tender is submitted on behalf of a temporary grouping, the Response form shall be co-signed by all members of the temporary grouping;

(b) a management summary with an organigram and a description of the tenderer's company including a confirmation that a dedicated project team as requested above will be assigned to the EFCB.

4.3 Among the Candidates meeting the minimum requirements set out in Section 4.2, the ECB shall select those which best meet the following selection criteria:

(a) the Candidate's general experience and expertise, assessed on the basis of the Candidate's past experience as demonstrated by three (3) reference projects which

² Please refer to the following website for the defined language level grid:

<https://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/sites/default/files/cefr-en.pdf>

were delivered within the last four years (2016-2019) and which are comparable in terms of scope, size and complexity with the Contract tendered by the ECB (weighting of this criterion: 100%).

See **Annex 2** for further details.

IV. Outcome of the Call to express interest for participation

1. Notification of outcome

- 1.1 The ECB will inform those interested parties that are invited to participate in a tender procedure in writing. The successful interested parties will receive the tender documentation within the time frame indicated in the notification. The status of the Call to express interest for participating (i.e. 'ongoing' / 'pending selection decision' / 'closed') is available on the ECB's website under the Procurement section (www.ecb.europa.eu => about => procurement => Tenders (ongoing) or Archives ('pending selection decision' or 'closed') (<http://www.ecb.europa.eu/ecb/jobsproc/tenders/html/index.en.html>)). Interested parties shall regularly check the status.
- 1.2 Interested parties may, within 15 calendar days after closing the Call to express interest for participating, request the ECB to provide general information for rejecting their expression of interest for participation. Such requests shall be submitted in writing (by e-mail to procurement@ecb.europa.eu). The ECB does not assume any responsibility for queries which are not submitted accordingly. In case of doubt, interested parties shall demonstrate the ECB's receipt of such request.
- 1.3 The ECB may decide to withhold certain information where the release of such information would affect other interested parties' legitimate commercial interests, would hinder application of the law or would otherwise be contrary to the public interest.

2. Jurisdiction

The General Court of the European Union in Luxembourg (Rue du Fort Niedergrünewald L-2925 Luxembourg) shall have exclusive jurisdiction in any dispute between the ECB and a interested party relating to this procedure. The time-limit to bring proceedings under Article 263 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union shall begin to run two months from receipt of the appeal decision.

3. European Ombudsman

An interested party may also lodge a complaint with the European Ombudsman (1 Avenue du Président Robert Schuman, CS 30403, FR - 67001 Strasbourg Cedex) in accordance with Article 228 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and the Statute of the European Ombudsman. A complaint must be made within two years from the date when the complainant becomes aware of the facts on which the complaint is based.

V. General rules

1. Temporary groupings

- 1.1 Interested parties may establish temporary groupings with a view to jointly obtaining the Contract.
- 1.2 Temporary groupings shall remain unchanged throughout the actual tender procedure.

2. Subcontracting

- 2.1 Interested parties may subcontract parts of the envisaged scope.
- 2.2 If interested parties intend to rely on the capacities of subcontractors or other entities for the purpose of fulfilling the selection criteria set out in Chapter III, Section 4, and would be invited to participate in the subsequent tender procedure following this Call to express interest for participation, they will be requested to prove to the ECB that they will have at their disposal the subcontractor's resources necessary to perform the Contract.

3. No multiple expressions of interest to participate

Interested parties shall submit only one expression of interest for participation. The ECB may exclude from participation any interested parties who submit several expressions of interest to participate or who:

- (a) are members of the same group of affiliated undertakings as another interested party;
- (b) are members of a temporary grouping together with other interested parties;
- (c) offer a substantial part of the Contract to another interested party as subcontractor;
- (d) if there are indications that they have received information regarding the expression of interest for participation prepared by another interested party or
- (e) if the submission of separate expressions of interest for participation distorts otherwise free competition among Interested parties.

4. Confidentiality; professional secrecy

- 4.1 Subject to the exceptions referred to in Section 4.2, interested parties shall:
 - (a) at all times treat the contents of this and any related documents and information (together the 'Information') as confidential;
 - (b) not disclose, copy, reproduce, distribute or pass any of the Information to any other person at any time or allow any of these things to happen;
 - (c) not use any of the Information for any purpose other than for the purposes of submitting (or deciding whether to submit) a expressions of interest to participate; and
 - (d) not undertake any publicity activity within any section of the media.

- 4.2 Interested parties may disclose, distribute or pass Information to third parties provided that either:
- (a) the Information is already publicly available (other than through a breach of these confidentiality rules); or
 - (b) the Information is disclosed for the sole purpose of preparing expression of interest to participate and the person receiving the Information undertakes in writing to keep the Information confidential on the same terms as if that person were the Candidate; or
 - (c) the interested parties obtains the prior written consent of the ECB in relation to such disclosure, distribution or passing of Information; or
 - (d) the Candidate is legally required to make such a disclosure.
- 4.3 The ECB is by law subject to the highest standards of professional secrecy and confidentiality³. The ECB may disclose detailed information relating to the expression of interest for participation:
- (a) to its staff and other organisations, companies or persons involved in the expressions of interest and/or subsequent tender procedure;
 - (b) to other Interested parties, if the information is materially relevant for all Interested parties or if the ECB is required by law to disclose such information in both cases subject to the duty to protect the Candidate's commercial interests;
 - (c) to the general public to the extent the ECB is obliged to disclose the information in order to fulfil statutory transparency requirements.

5. Data protection

- 5.1 The ECB shall process personal data received (such as names, contact details and other information provided in curriculum vitae) in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data⁴ as well as with Decision ECB/2007/1 of 17 April 2007 adopting implementing rules concerning data protection at the European Central Bank⁵.
- 5.2 The ECB shall use such personal data solely for the purpose of evaluating the received and maintaining a database of potential interested parties. Within these limits, the ECB may transfer the personal data to third parties supporting the ECB in the procurement process including external contractors, national central banks or other partner organisations. The data subjects concerned may request access to their personal data and request the rectification of any data that is inaccurate or incomplete.

³ See Article 37 of the Statute of the European System of Central Banks and of the European Central Bank and Article 26(4) of Decision ECB/2016/2.

⁴ OJ L 8, 12.1.2001, p. 1.

⁵ OJ L 116, 4.5.2007, p. 64.

5.3 For all queries relating to such data, data subjects may address the data controller who is the Head of the ECB's Central Procurement Division (Sonnemannstrasse 22, 60314 Frankfurt am Main, Germany, procurement@ecb.europa.eu, Fax +49 69 1344 7110).

The 2019 Privacy Statement can be accessed via the following link:

https://www.ecb.europa.eu/ecb/jobsproc/tenders/shared/pdf/2019_Privacy_statement_for_processing_personal_data_in_the_course_of_a_procurement_procedure.pdf

5.4 Data subjects shall have the right to have recourse to the European Data Protection Supervisor.

6. No obligation to award the Contract; cancellation

6.1 The initiation of this procedure imposes no obligation on the ECB to award the Contract.

6.2 The ECB may cancel the Call to express interest for participation and/or the subsequent tender procedure as a whole or in parts at any time before the Contract is signed without interested parties being entitled to claim any compensation (Article 38 of Decision ECB/2016/2).